



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture  
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE  
VIRGINIA FIELD OFFICE



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## **USDA to Collect and Publish County-Level Data on Land Rental Rates**

Richmond, Virginia – As directed by the new Farm Bill, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will for the first time collect and publish county-level data regarding the cash rental rates producers pay for cropland and pastureland.

"The Farm Service Agency (FSA) and other USDA agencies rely on cash rent data to administer commodity, credit, conservation, disaster and loan programs," said Herman Ellison, director of the NASS Virginia Field Office. "Until this year, NASS only published this information at the national and state levels. But there's great interest in the county-level data, which will be of particular use in FSA's administration of the Conservation Reserve Program, allowing their programs to adequately reflect the prevailing rental rates in each community."

Ellison explained that the demand for county-level cash rent information will require a greatly expanded data collection effort on NASS's part.

"We will be reaching out to producers in several ways," he said. "Questions will be included in four of our regular surveys: the biannual cattle survey, the biannual sheep and goat survey, the quarterly crops/stocks survey, and the annual acreage and production survey. In addition, we have mailed a separate cash rents survey to some producers not covered by one of those other surveys."

To make it as simple as possible for producers to respond, NASS is offering several ways for them to report their information: by mail, fax, online or through a phone interview with a NASS field representative. Regardless of the method, the confidentiality of all responses is protected by federal law. NASS publishes only aggregate-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

NASS's target date for release of the cash rent data is April 2009. For more information, contact the NASS Virginia Field Office at 1-(800)-772-0670.

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